sionally nodding approval, and then said, "Surely this was our mistake. The one who makes no error is either a freak or a fool. The wise man is the one who is able to see and correct his mistakes."

It was easy for Lenin to change his mind if he thought that conditions had changed. But when he made a decision, that was the law for his faction and there was no appeal against it. He was a thinker in the sense that he had a fruitful and completely independent mind, but he lacked the intellectual humility that usually goes with the capacity for thinking. His intolerance shocked me the more as I personally was always inclined to a sort of agnosticism and considered all truths as working hypotheses, valid for our current stage of knowledge. What reconciled me with Lenin was his absence of vanity.

Lenin did not like to have yes-men around him and treated them with undisguised contempt. Apart from his technical aides, most people I met at his home in Finland were persons who were devoted to him but remained independent. Some had disagreed with him more than once. He held no grudge against them so long as he could count on them in fundamental matters. And he could rely on them! Once a decision was made, Lenin's authority was supreme in his circle.

Bogdanov, the best economist of the Marxian school in Russia and a member of Lenin's inner circle, once said to me, "I have often disagreed with Ilyich, but he has almost always proved to be right." I was less certain of Lenin's superhuman wisdom. Once I told him I thought I had discovered the clue to his philosophy.

"And that is?"

"A non-Euclidian axiom: The part is more than the whole. Labor is more than the nation, the S-D party is more than the labor movement, Bolshevism is more than the party, and your Center here is more than the Bolshevist faction."

He laughed heartily. "There is something in that. Of course, the part that is the salt of the whole is more than the rest of the whole."

Lenin was an incomparable master at winning proselytes. One of his approaches was to eradicate any moral "prejudices" in the converted. He recognized no morals, no rules of decency in politics, and had nothing but contemptuous mockery for the concept of honor. "Revolution is a dirty job," I heard him say. "You do not make it with white gloves."

I did not like this attitude. I kept faith with Petrazhitsky's theory of the state as a moral phenomenon and regarded the revolution as a clash between the old and new systems of moral values. To Lenin, this was ridiculous idealism.